

For those who are not already gagging on the Republicans' so-called Contract With America, hold your breath.

#### PUTTING GOVERNMENT ON A DIET

(Mrs. SEASTRAND asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. SEASTRAND. The facts are in, Mr. Speaker. The Clinton economic plan has not paid off for middle America.

According to a Labor Department report, the median weekly earnings of full-time workers—in real, inflation-adjusted terms—actually declined about 2 percent last year. In other words, Americans are working harder and getting less for it.

What makes this so startling is that it occurred during a time when the economy was growing.

This is just one reason why we need to move forward on our plan to cut taxes and balance the budget.

American families need tax relief.

American savers and investors need incentives.

American workers need more job opportunities.

Our plan will deliver all that. And it will be paid for by real reductions in government spending.

Mr. Speaker, the Clinton administration has put the American family, the American saver, the American worker on a diet. We Republicans will put the Government on a diet.

#### MORE ON THE ETHICS PROBLEMS OF THE HOUSE

(Mr. PETERSON of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PETERSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is a great honor to serve in the people's House. Here, every Member is equal and directly responsible to his or her constituents to represent them at the national level.

To ensure that we each focus on constituent representation rather than our own or special interests, numerous ethics rules have been established to govern our conduct in carrying out our duties.

For instance: We cannot accept any outside earned income nor can we accept honoraria; we are prohibited from seeking special favors for ourselves from governmental agencies; and nor can we accept any funding from a corporation or person for representing their specific interest before a governmental agency.

Well, Mr. Speaker, given all of these very precise rules—it bothers me deeply that virtually every day a new allegation is reported in the news related to your multiple relationships with so-called think tanks, persons, and corporations that suggest a violation of the House ethics rules.

These allegations have the potential to discredit every Member of this House. Let us clear the air. I ask you to call for an outside counsel to investigate these allegations to clear your name and to lift the cloud over this House and to ensure no harm is done to the good reputations of all of the Members of this institution.

□ 1030

#### RESCISSION BILL IS ON THE RIGHT TRACK

(Mr. LINDER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, several years ago the American people were rightfully outraged when U.S. Congressmen wrote checks on empty bank accounts. The House Bank scandal was a disgrace to this body and an example of the lack of fiscal accountability common in Washington.

However, there seems to be less anger from the American people and less shame in this Congress today, as the Federal Government continues to write checks on an empty account.

The debt has reached crisis proportions, but President Clinton and the liberals have renounced any responsibility to this disaster—despite the fact that Bill Clinton himself noted in his 1994 budget that if left unattended the debt would force future generations to pay an 82-percent tax rate.

We have a moral obligation to clean up this mess. The rescissions package is a good start. The Republicans aim to rescind \$17.2 billion.

Lobbyists are up in arms. If that many special interest groups hate the rescissions bill, I know we are on the right track.

#### DO NOT KILL BIG BIRD

(Mr. ENGEL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I am here to deliver one short concise, simple message to my colleagues: Do not kill Big Bird. Do not kill Big Bird by voting for mean-spirited Republican budget cuts on Public Broadcasting. Do not kill Big Bird in order to help finance tax breaks for the very wealthy in this country. Do not kill Big Bird in order to help finance a star wars program that this country neither wants or needs.

Do not kill Big Bird because millions of American children, including my own three children, have grown up on Big Bird and "Sesame Street" and Mr. Rogers and Public Broadcasting. Do not kill Big Bird because Public Broadcasting works. Public Broadcasting is good for the American taxpayer and good for the American people.

Do not kill Big Bird because the public-private partnership of Public Broad-

casting is what has really proven to be successful in this country.

In short, Mr. Speaker, do not kill Big Bird.

#### ETHICALLY CHALLENGED ADMINISTRATION

(Mr. HOKE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HOKE. Mr. Speaker, we would not possibly kill Big Bird if we wanted to kill Big Bird. Nobody wants to kill Big Bird. The fact is that Big Bird generates hundreds and hundreds of millions of dollars of revenue every single year to the great benefit of the people that created it, and any suggestion that Big Bird is going anywhere is crazy.

We cannot go 1 week, 1 day without another new ethical allegation that is made against a member of the Cabinet. Today it is Henry Cisneros and his problem with Housing and Urban Development. Over the weekend there was a problem with Ron Brown and apparently Federico Peña had hired Mr. Brown using FAA funds to lobby on behalf of Denver back in the late 1980's or early 1990's.

There is a pall, a cloud of ethical problems that hangs over this administration. It is certainly no secret that it is, let us call it in the politically correct language of the day, the most ethically challenged administration of the 20th century, perhaps of both centuries.

#### RECENT ACTIONS BY THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT

(Mr. TORRICELLI asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. TORRICELLI. Mr. Speaker, several weeks ago the French Government was complaining about the activities of American Government officials. This came as an enormous surprise. The Japanese, the Germans, and Americans did not know there was any technology in France that anybody needed.

Yesterday the French President hosts Fidel Castro.

Mr. Speaker, we are entitled to doubt whether if there were an island in the Mediterranean with a 30-year dictatorship, with no human rights for any of its people that the French Government would be so understanding.

In the coming years France will have its difficulties in North Africa. Europe has not seen its last internal political problems. I trust that all of the people of the Americas will be similarly understanding and give the same difference to the French Government when it faces its own next crisis.

#### TAYLOR-DICKS EMERGENCY TIMBER SALVAGE AMENDMENT

(Mr. HERGER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1